

## **DISCLAIMER**

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## **APPLICATION OF**

**WASHINGTON GAS LIGHT COMPANY**

**CASE NO. PUE-2002-00178**

**For approval of a plan to  
remedy billing errors**

## **HEARING EXAMINER'S RULING**

**August 20, 2002**

On March 25, 2002, pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-100 B of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure ("Rules"), Washington Gas Light Company ("Washington Gas" or "Company") filed a Petition for approval of "certain aspects" of its plan to remedy billing errors. Washington Gas requested the Commission approve its plan to use the annual leak survey program to identify customers who have been billed incorrectly.

By Order dated April 10, 2002, the Commission docketed the matter; determined that the matter should be treated as an Application pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-80 A of the Commission's Rules; assigned the matter to a Hearing Examiner; and directed any interested party and the Commission's Staff to file with the Commission by May 10, 2002, a responsive pleading to the Application or a request for hearing or both a responsive pleading and a request for hearing. The Company was also directed to provide public notice of its Application.

On May 9, 2002, Staff filed a Motion for Extension in which it asked that the deadline for interested parties and Staff to file responsive pleadings be extended from May 10, 2002, to May 24, 2002. Staff's Motion for Extension was granted by a Hearing Examiner's Ruling dated May 9, 2002.

On May 22, 2002, the Company filed a Motion for Extension, requesting that the deadline for interested parties and Staff to file responsive pleadings be further extended from May 24, 2002, to June 21, 2002. The Company's Motion for Extension was granted by a Hearing Examiner's Ruling dated May 23, 2002.

On June 21, 2002, Washington Gas filed a Joint Stipulation, which it claimed resolved all issues related to the remediation of billing errors. Washington Gas represented that the Staff, Division of Consumer Counsel of the Office of Attorney General ("Attorney General"), and Washington Gas Energy Services, Inc. agreed to the Joint Stipulation. In addition, Washington Gas represented that the Arlington County Citizen and Consumer Affairs and the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Division will support the Joint Stipulation before their respective County Boards of Supervisors. Also, on June 21, 2002, the Staff filed a letter in support of the Joint Stipulation.

In addition, on June 21, 2002, the Attorney General filed comments in favor of the Joint Stipulation and requested a public hearing for affected current and former customers to present

their individual views to the Commission. A Hearing Examiner's Ruling dated July 15, 2002, scheduled public hearings for September 9, 2002, at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. at the Fairfax County Judicial Center, General District Court – Traffic Division Courtroom 1-D, 4110 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, Virginia 22030, and directed the Company to publish notice of the hearing.

On August 19, 2002, Washington Gas filed a Motion for Leave to Amend the Joint Stipulation by Adding a Signature Line for Fairfax County ("Motion"). In support of the Motion, Washington Gas stated that the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Division was an active participant in the discussions that led to the Joint Stipulation. The Company advised that on July 22, 2002, at its regularly scheduled meeting, the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County approved the Joint Stipulation. Therefore, Washington Gas requested leave to amend the Joint Stipulation. Based on the Company's pleading, I find that the Motion should be granted. Accordingly,

**IT IS DIRECTED** that the Joint Stipulation filed in this proceeding on June 21, 2002, be amended to incorporate the additional signature page executed by the County Attorney for the County of Fairfax and attached to the Company's Motion.

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Alexander F. Skirpan, Jr.  
Hearing Examiner